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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 911

By Rochelle

A RESOLUTION to commend Dr. Bob Womack for his honorable and astute service to Middle Tennessee State University and the people of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to specially recognize those estimable public servants who have dedicated their professional careers and personal excellence to improving the quality of life for their fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Bob Womack is one such superlative educator who evinces the greatest integrity and probity in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, Bob Womack was born in Bedford County, where his father was a farmer and livestock dealer; and

WHEREAS, educated in the public schools of Bedford County, Bob Womack attended Middle Tennessee State University, where he earned a Bachelor of Science Degree as an English Major in 1941; and

WHEREAS, he subsequently shared his knowledge and expertise through his gift for teaching English as an instructor at Central High School in Shelbyville for two years; and

WHEREAS, he further supplemented his studies with graduate work at Peabody College, earning a Masters of Science in School Administration in 1950 and a Doctorate of Education in School Administration in 1957; and

WHEREAS, answering his country's call to duty, Bob Womack served a meritorious term as a U.S. Naval officer in the South Pacific Theatre during World War II; and

WHEREAS, upon completing his graduate work, Dr. Womack served for seven years in the Lebanon School System, serving his last position as Principal of Lebanon Junior High School; he then joined the Education Department at Middle Tennessee State University in 1957; and

WHEREAS, presently serving as a full professor at MTSU, Dr. Womack remains a valued and important member of the faculty in the Department of Educational Leadership after 43 years of estimable service; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his commitment to excellence in education, Dr. Womack has two other passions that consume a great deal of his time and effort; he is a renowned expert on both Tennessee Walking Horses and the American Civil War; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee Walking Horses played a prominent role during Dr. Womack's childhood on the family farm in Bedford County; Walking Horses were very important to the Womack family, both as a source of income and for their aesthetic contributions; and

WHEREAS, dedicated to the well-being, progress and prosperity of this noble breed of animals, Dr. Womack has served with acumen on the Board of Directors of the National Walking Horse Breeders' Association and on the Board of Directors of the National Walking Horse Owners' Association; he has also astutely served as the Director of the International Walking Horse Registry; and

WHEREAS, his extensive knowledge of, and experience with, Tennessee Walking Horses is acclaimed throughout the United States; he is often called upon to speak on the subject and, in 1973, he published a excellent book entitled *The Echo of Hoofbeats*, which traces the development of the Walking Horse and recounts the problems that have beset the breed in recent times; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Womack's interest in the American Civil War began at an early age; as a child he listened to his mother, an unreconstructed Rebel, tell the tales she had heard from Confederate Veterans; and

WHEREAS, with the intriguing and fascinating events of the war etched deeply into his mind and spirit, Dr. Womack began to search for resource materials that gave more accurate accounts of the events that took place in this country's most momentous war; and

WHEREAS, he has found the answers to many of his questions by collecting and reading the letters and diaries of Civil War soldiers for well over 30 years; and

WHEREAS, the culmination of his meticulous research efforts into the Civil War resulted in his authorship of a book entitled *Call Forth The Mighty Men*, which was hailed as "the best book I have read about the Civil War in Tennessee" and as "a powerful evocation of the most important and the most deadly American war told from the letters and diaries kept by common soldiers" by Richard Marius of Harvard University; and

WHEREAS, his greatest interest in the Civil War lies in the psychological, sociological and philosophical influences on the ordinary people who were caught in its grasp; he has spoken eloquently on the subject of the Civil War in most major cities in the eastern United States; and

WHEREAS, his deep understanding of history and educational theory and his logical nature as a teacher have earned him distinction as one of the nation's leading educators; he recognizes the importance of making history interesting by teaching personalities, circumstances, and context rather than merely reciting dates and facts; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Womack wisely states that without history, today's citizens would not be able to appreciate the progress that has been made in our nation; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Womack's influence has extended to students from across this great state: he is the co-author of *Tennessee A History* a 7th grade textbook on the history of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Bob Womack is a highly respected member of his profession; he is a member of the MTSU Education Association, the Tennessee Education Association, the National Education Association and Phi Kappa Phi; and

WHEREAS, during his sterling tenure at MTSU, he has served as a valuable member of the University Planning Committee, the Miller Coliseum Committee, the University Master Plan Committee, the Street Naming Committee, and the University Relations Committee; he has also served as the Chairman of the Cook Foundation Fund and on the Department Tenure and Promotion Committee; and

WHEREAS, throughout his exemplary career, Dr. Womack has distinguished himself as a public-spirited citizen of the highest order and as an exceptional asset to his community; and

WHEREAS, Bob Womack's outstanding success as an educator, historian and author is directly attributable to his reliance on the time-honored values of hard work and common sense and his uncommon ability to work well with people from all walks of life; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Womack is a an extremely giving person who often reaches out with compassion to people whom life has treated unkindly, and he epitomizes the ideal of the consummate professional, dedicated public servant and reliable friend and neighbor; and

WHEREAS, his many accomplishments aside, Dr. Womack is most appreciative of the relationships he shares with his wife, Elizabeth, and their four children, Ricky, Laura, Lynn, and our most valued colleague, Senator Andy Womack; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Womack is the proud grandparent of six grandchildren, David, Dana, Marguerite, Sara, Jackson, and Samuel, and the great-grandparent of one great-granddaughter, Molly; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Bob Womack is wholly committed to the noble precepts of quality education for all, and he should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we hereby commend Dr. Bob Womack, educator, professor, historian,

author, husband, father and friend for his honorable and astute service to Middle Tennessee State University and the good people of Tennessee and salute his unswerving commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.